United Nations CEDAW/C/HRV/CO/4-5

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Croatia*

1. The Committee considered the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Croatia (CEDAW/C/HRV/4-5) at its 1319th and 1320th meetings, on 15 July 2015 (see CEDAW/C/SR.1319 and 1320). The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/HRV/Q/4-5 and the responses of Croatia are contained in CEDAW/C/HRV/Q/4-5/Add.1.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the fact that the State party submitted its combined fourth and fifth periodic reports. It appreciates the State party's written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group and welcomes the constructive dialogue with the delegation, the oral presentation by the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to most of the questions posed orally by the Committee during the dialogue, while noting that some questions were not fully answered.

3. The Committee commends the State party on its multisectoral delegation, which was led by the Head of the Office for Gender Equality, Helena Štimac Radin, and included representatives of the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Ministry of Labour and Pension System, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, the Ministry of the Interior, the Croatian Employment Service and the Permanent Mission of Croatia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2009 of the State party's combined second and third periodic reports

* Adopted by the Committee at its sixty-first session (6-24 July 2015).

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(CEDAW/C/CRO/2-3) in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular the adoption of the following legislation:

(a) Act on the Rights of Victims of Sexual Violence in the Homeland War, which regulates the status of civilian victims of sexual violence and related reparations (financial, symbolic, health and psychosocial services), in 2015;

(b) Maternity and Parental Benefits Act, in 2008 (amended in 2014);

(c) Free Legal Aid Act, in 2014;

(d) Anti-Discrimination Act, in 2008 (amended in 2012);

(e) Gender Equality Act, in 2008.

5. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality, such as the adoption of the following:

(a) Strategy of Women Entrepreneurship Development in the Republic of Croatia, covering the period 2014-2020, in June 2014;

(b) National Programme of Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, covering the period 2013-2016, in April 2013;

(c) National Roma Inclusion Strategy, covering the period 2013-2020, in 2012;

(d) National Policy for Gender Equality, covering the period 2011-2015, in 2011.

6. The Committee welcomes the fact that, in the period since the consideration of the previous reports, the State party has ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, in 2013.

C. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

Parliament

7. **The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see the statement by the Committee on its relationship with parliamentarians, adopted at the forty-fifth session, in 2010). It invites Parliament, in line with its mandate, to take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the next reporting period under the Convention.**

Constitutional and legislative framework

8. The Committee notes that the Constitution enshrines the right to gender equality and non-discrimination and establishes the State party as a secular State. The Committee is also aware of the various concordats that the State party has signed with the Holy See. The Committee would like to ensure that the supremacy of the Convention prevails in order to prevent setbacks in areas such as access to sexual and reproductive health, including access to safe abortion and contraceptives, age-appropriate sexual education and the placing of primacy on women as individual rights holders rather than on the family unit.

9. **The Committee urges the State party to take measures, including legislation, to put in place adequate safeguards to prevent sociocultural**

attitudes, including those of a religious origin, from constituting hindrances to the full realization of women's rights.

Visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol and the Committee's general recommendations

10. The Committee notes that the State party took into account the Committee's concluding observations and recommendations in the formulation of the National Policy for Gender Equality, covering the period 2011-2015. It remains concerned, however, about the lack of visibility and direct application of the Convention, as reflected by, among others, a lack of reliance on the Convention in national proceedings, a lack of proceedings under the Optional Protocol and the fact that the Committee's general recommendations have not been translated into Croatian and disseminated.

11. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Further strengthen legal education and capacity-building programmes for judges, prosecutors and lawyers on the Convention, the Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Committee's views on individual communications and inquiries, to enable them to apply, invoke and/or refer to the provisions of the Convention directly in order to interpret national legislation in line with the Convention;**

(b) **Raise awareness among women about their rights under the Convention and the procedures under the Optional Protocol thereto;**

(c) **Encourage women to report cases of discrimination based on sex and gender to the police and judicial and quasi-judicial bodies;**

(d) **Translate and disseminate the Committee's general recommendations.**

National machinery for the advancement of women

12. The Committee notes that the State party has an office for gender equality and an ombudsperson for gender equality to serve as national machinery for the advancement of women. It is concerned, however, that their effectiveness is hampered by the inadequacy of the human, technical and financial resources allocated to them, in particular in the light of recent budget cuts. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of capacity and qualified staff of the county and city committees.

13. **The Committee recommends that the State party increase the human, technical and financial resources, including at the county and city committee levels, allocated to the Office for Gender Equality and the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality in order to improve their effective functioning as the national machinery responsible for the advancement of women and the full implementation of the Convention.**

Temporary special measures

14. The Committee notes the existence of a strategy of women entrepreneurship development that covers the period 2014-2020. It is concerned, however, that temporary special measures to accelerate de facto equality and to address the situation of disadvantaged and marginalized women who are subjected to

intersecting forms of discrimination, such as Roma women, rural women, women with disabilities, internally displaced women, returnee women and older women, remain underutilized by the State party. Furthermore, the Committee regrets that the State party abolished its temporary special measure on education after only a year and without assessing its impact. The Committee is also concerned at the inadequate understanding of temporary special measures among members of the legislature, the executive and the civil service.

15. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt further temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 on the subject, as part of a necessary strategy to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality of women and men, for example in employment, education and health;**

(b) **Adopt temporary special measures targeting disadvantaged and marginalized groups of women, including Roma women, rural women, women with disabilities, internally displaced women, returnee women and older women;**

(c) **Evaluate the impact of such measures and make the findings, including gender-relevant statistics, available to the public;**

(d) **Undertake an impact assessment of its recently abolished temporary special measure on education and use the findings to guide the establishment of other temporary special measures for gender equality;**

(e) **Conduct training and awareness-raising on temporary special measures, in particular for members of the legislature.**

Stereotypes

16. The Committee notes that the State party has recently implemented a points-based system that allocates additional funding to radio and television stations for the production of gender-sensitive content. It is concerned, however, about the persistence of stereotypes concerning the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society that have the effect of perpetuating traditional roles for women as mothers and wives and undermining women's social status and their educational and career prospects. The Committee also notes with concern that the media, in particular in advertisements and television programmes that promote the objectification of women, continue to convey stereotyped and derogatory images of women, the numerous programmes and measures implemented to counter that phenomenon notwithstanding.

17. **The Committee calls upon the State party:**

(a) **To further develop and implement a comprehensive policy with proactive and sustained measures, targeting women and men and girls and boys, to overcome stereotypical attitudes towards the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society;**

(b) **To strengthen the institutional capacity of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality and its regulatory, complaints and sanctions mechanisms to deal with gender-discriminatory media or content objectifying women, including by providing for effective and commensurate sanctions in cases in**

which discriminatory, stereotypical or derogatory content has been disseminated by media producers and/or distributors.

Violence against women

18. The Committee welcomes the adoption of a law on protection against domestic violence and of a national strategy for protection against family violence covering the period 2011-2016. It remains concerned, however, that, in general, the State party's legislative and policy framework is more concerned with keeping the family unit intact than with ensuring the safety of women who are victims of gender-based domestic violence. The Committee is particularly concerned by the following issues:

(a) Delay in ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence;

(b) Absence of a national plan for the implementation of the comprehensive recommendations made to the State party by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences;

(c) Practice of dual arrests, whereby women who are victims of domestic violence are being arrested and occasionally sanctioned, along with alleged aggressors, for being verbally insulting or defending themselves;

(d) Accountability gap that results from women being compelled to pursue domestic violence charges under the legal framework of misdemeanour rather than criminal prosecution, given that the former allows for more rapid enforcement of protection orders but precludes stronger sanctions;

(e) Exclusion from the law on protection against domestic violence of intimate partner relationships and past relationships where partners continue to pose the threat of violence in instances in which partners did not live together, lived together for less than three years or did not have children together;

(f) Suspension of protection orders when an alleged perpetrator of domestic violence appeals against such an order;

(g) Inadequate number of shelters for women who are victims of violence;

(h) Recent adoption of a less stringent definition of rape, as a qualified form of sexual intercourse without consent, resulting in the reduction of the gravity of rape as a criminal offence and in lighter sentencing.

19. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 19 on violence against women, the Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To expeditiously ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence;**

(b) **To formulate and implement a national plan, with time-bound targets, for the implementation of the comprehensive recommendations made to the State party by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences;**

(c) **To abolish the practice of dual arrests in cases of domestic violence;**

(d) **To amend its criminal legislation on domestic violence to ensure the provision of expeditious protection orders for victims while criminal**

proceedings are pending and also to provide for civil protective measures that allow for both emergency, ex parte protective measures and/or long-term protective measures, as appropriate;

(e) **To amend the law on protection against domestic violence to include within its scope all intimate partner relationships and past relationships where partners continue to pose the threat of violence;**

(f) **To adopt a precautionary approach for victims of alleged domestic violence that provides for the continued implementation of protection orders during the consideration of an appeal against such an order;**

(g) **To provide adequate, secure and autonomous funding to shelters and support services for women who are victims of violence;**

(h) **To amend the legal definition of rape to bring it into line with accepted international standards.**

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

20. While the Committee notes with appreciation the legislative and policy measures and programmes aimed at protecting women and girls who are victims of trafficking, it is concerned:

(a) That perpetrators of trafficking are often charged with offences of pimping rather than the more serious offence of human trafficking, resulting in a disturbingly low rate of conviction for human trafficking;

(b) That victims of exploitation of prostitution are sometimes prosecuted rather than provided with appropriate support measures, while persons purchasing sex from victims of forced prostitution and/or victims of trafficking are not consistently prosecuted and commensurately punished;

(c) That there are inadequate mechanisms for identifying victims of trafficking in situations of heightened risk;

(d) That there are inadequate systems for the collection of disaggregated data on victims of trafficking, including by sex, age, ethnicity and nationality;

(e) That there are inadequate shelters, and training of personnel therein, for victims of trafficking;

(f) That there are inadequate measures to address the specific vulnerabilities and needs of non-national victims of trafficking.

21. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure that perpetrators of trafficking receive sentences commensurate with the gravity of the offence;**

(b) **Consider measures to discourage the demand for prostitution and ensure that women and girls who are victims of trafficking who have been subjected to forced prostitution are referred to adequate support measures rather than being prosecuted by default and that individuals who have purchased sex from victims of trafficking are prosecuted and adequately punished;**

(c) **Strengthen measures to identify and provide support to women at risk of trafficking;**

(d) **Establish procedures and systems for the collection of disaggregated data on women who are victims of trafficking;**

(e) **Increase the human, technical and financial resources allocated to shelters for victims of trafficking to increase both the number of such shelters, in particular in rural areas, and the quality of the care and of legal and psychological counselling available at such shelters;**

(f) **Strengthen support measures for women, including non-nationals, who wish to leave prostitution;**

(g) **Analyse the factors leading to the involvement of non-national women in prostitution in order to strengthen measures to address their specific vulnerabilities to trafficking and exploitation of prostitution.**

Participation in political and public life

22. The Committee notes the adoption of the Gender Equality Act in 2008 and the Act on the Election of Representatives to the Croatian Parliament in 2015, the latter introducing a requirement that women constitute at least 40 per cent of electoral candidates. The Committee also notes that 45 per cent of the Members of the European Parliament for Croatia are women. It is concerned, however, that the use of the preferential vote system could have the effect of nullifying the quotas for female candidates. The Committee is also specifically concerned:

(a) That women remain significantly underrepresented in Parliament, local legislative bodies, the Government and the civil service, including in senior and decision-making positions;

(b) That women remain underrepresented in management and leadership positions in State-owned and private enterprises;

(c) That female diplomats do not enjoy regular maternity leave when posted overseas and are required to return to the capital in order to exercise their right to maternity leave.

23. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Promote the full and equal participation of women in political and public life and in the civil service, especially at the senior and decision-making levels;**

(b) **Amend its system of preferential voting to ensure the fulfilment of the mandatory quota of 40 per cent of women candidates on electoral lists of political parties and adopt other temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, such as a gender parity system for appointments and accelerated recruitment of women in senior positions;**

(c) **Consider implementing, including by legislation, quotas for women's membership on the boards of private and State-owned enterprises;**

(d) **Ensure that female diplomats are able to fully exercise their right to maternity leave, including while posted overseas, if they so choose.**

Participation of women in the peace process

24. The Committee appreciates the State party's commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), including its pledge to renew its action plan in that regard in 2016 and its support for the implementation of the resolution in countries affected by conflict. The Committee is concerned, however, about the limited measurable impact of the resolution on women in the State party, as a post-conflict country, and the inadequate inclusion of women in security discussions and reconstruction processes.

25. **The Committee encourages the State party:**

(a) **To take measures to ensure full accountability for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the full participation of women in security and reconstruction processes;**

(b) **To increase the level of support provided to local women's organizations and networks that are active in peace initiatives and post-conflict reconstruction processes;**

(c) **To ensure the holding of meaningful and broad consultations with women and members of civil society working on women's rights during the formulation and implementation of the renewed action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).**

Education

26. The Committee welcomes the high enrolment rate of girls in secondary education and of women in tertiary education, but remains concerned at:

(a) The prevalence of traditional and patriarchal values in school curricula and lack of gender equality education;

(b) The inadequacy of age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education in schools;

(c) The continuation of sex-based differences in enrolment in secondary education, whereby girls are concentrated in general secondary education as opposed to vocational or industrial education and women in traditional areas in tertiary education;

(d) The low representation of women employed in academic institutions, especially in leadership positions.

27. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Revise school curricula and materials to remove discriminatory gender stereotypes and include mandatory modules on gender education;**

(b) **Increase the hours and quality of age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education in schools;**

(c) **Intensify its efforts aimed at diversifying academic and vocational choices for women and men and girls and boys and take further measures to encourage women and men to choose non-traditional fields of education and career paths;**

(d) **Apply measures, including temporary special measures, to increase the representation of women in academic institutions, especially in leadership positions.**

Employment

28. While noting the existence of a strategy of women entrepreneurship development that covers the period 2014-2020, the Committee is concerned at:

(a) The persistent horizontal and vertical occupational segregation, overrepresentation of women in low-paid and part-time jobs, lack of implementation in the labour market of equality legislation and lack of any gender impact assessments of the labour law reform in 2014;

(b) The lack of implementation of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and persistent gender wage gap;

(c) The prevalence of employment discrimination against women on the ground of pregnancy or maternity;

(d) The fact that the percentage of fathers taking paternity leave remains low;

(e) The marginalization and exclusion of Roma women and women with disabilities from the formal labour market.

29. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Introduce regulatory measures to ensure gender mainstreaming in the labour market and strengthen efforts to eliminate occupational segregation, both horizontal and vertical;**

(b) **Take measures to implement the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and to narrow and close the wage gap between women and men;**

(c) **Implement existing legislation and practices to ensure that women have access to effective mechanisms to complain about employment discrimination on the ground of pregnancy or maternity and the enforcement of timely and commensurate sanctions for employers engaging in discriminatory practices;**

(d) **Encourage the use of paternity leave for fathers and ensure that employers fulfil the legal obligation to make such leave available by introducing compulsory paternity leave;**

(e) **Increase access to formal employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for women, including Roma women and women belonging to other disadvantaged groups, and improve their possibilities to combine working life with family responsibilities, including by expanding the number of childcare facilities.**

Health

30. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) That the right to abortion is being denied by hospitals on the ground of conscientious objection, even though only individual doctors are recognized as

having that "right" and hospitals are legally required to ensure the provision of abortions;

(b) The lack of inclusion of abortion and modern contraception in the Croatian Health Insurance Fund, thus discriminating against women because such services are required by them;

(c) The low use, availability and accessibility of modern forms of contraception and reproductive services, in particular for disadvantaged groups of women;

(d) The lack of oversight procedures and mechanisms for ensuring adequate standards of care and the protection of women's rights during deliveries, as well as their autonomy, and the lack of options for giving birth outside hospitals.

31. **The Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To ensure that the exercise of conscientious objection does not impede women's effective access to reproductive health-care services, especially abortion and post-abortion care and contraceptives;**

(b) **To ensure universal coverage of abortion and modern contraception within the Croatian Health Insurance Fund;**

(c) **To ensure the availability and accessibility of modern forms of contraception and reproductive services to all women, including disadvantaged groups of women;**

(d) **To ensure the existence of adequate safeguards so that medical procedures for childbirth are subject to objective assessments of necessity and conducted with adequate standards of care and respect for women's autonomy and the requirements for informed consent, and to introduce options for home births for women who wish to avail themselves of that possibility.**

Economic empowerment of women

32. The Committee notes the entry into force of the Pension Insurance Act in January 2014, but remains concerned that low levels of social benefits and very strict eligibility criteria result in a situation in which many women living in poverty, in particular older women and those without previous employment, are excluded from social protection.

33. **The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a study of the socioeconomic situation of women living in poverty, in particular older women and those without previous employment, and use the results to inform the formulation of policies to ensure that social protection measures and employment legislation address the lower average years of contribution of women, the impact of women's lower retirement age and more frequent non-contributory periods and women's lower average salaries.**

Rural women

34. The Committee is concerned about the limited access by rural women to land (given that only some 28 per cent of farms are owned by women) and related resources, social and health services, training facilities and economic opportunities, as well as their participation in political and public life, including in decision-

making processes at the community level. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of childcare facilities in rural areas and that the Croatian Rural Development Programme, adopted by the European Commission in May 2015, lacks adequate measures to specifically address the above-mentioned issues.

35. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that rural women have adequate access to land and related resources, as well as social, health and other basic services and economic opportunities, together with equal opportunities to participate in political and public life, in particular in decision-making processes at the community level. It also recommends that the State party ensure the availability of childcare facilities in rural areas. It further recommends that the State party take into account the above-mentioned specific needs of rural women in the implementation of the Croatian Rural Development Programme.**

Roma women

36. The Committee is concerned about the lack of adequate financial resources allocated to the implementation and evaluation of measures to address discrimination against persons of Roma ethnicity, in addition to the continuing marginalization of Roma women and the intersecting forms of discrimination that they face, especially with regard to access to education, employment, health care, identity documents, justice and protection from violence, and about the persistence of traditional harmful practices such as early marriage that lead Roma girls to drop out of school. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of information on the use of temporary special measures to improve the situation of Roma women.

37. **The Committee recommends that the State party expeditiously allocate additional financial resources to national action plans and strategies aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against Roma women. In doing so, the State party should establish monitoring mechanisms and formulate clear time-bound targets, especially on access to essential services, education and early marriage. The State party should also consider adopting additional temporary special measures to meet those targets, with a view to accelerating the realization of substantive equality for Roma women.**

Lesbian, bisexual and transgender women

38. The Committee notes with concern discrimination, including by the judiciary and law enforcement personnel, against lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, in addition to the inadequacy of measures taken to combat hate speech against them, including the tendency to prosecute such offences under misdemeanour law rather than hate crime provisions.

39. **The Committee recommends that the State party take appropriate measures to enable lesbian, bisexual and transgender women to fully enjoy their human rights. In doing so, the State party should pay particular attention to ensuring the training of its judiciary and law enforcement personnel on non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, pursuant to its Gender Equality Act of 2008 (arts. 6, 13, 16, 31 and 36). It should also take measures to ensure adequate protection from hate speech and the prosecution of perpetrators with timely and commensurate sanctions.**

Women affected by conflict

40. The Committee notes that the State party has recently passed legislation providing for compensation to be paid to victims of sexual assaults during the 1991-1995 conflict. It remains concerned, however, that there has been inadequate overall progress in providing women who were victims of sexual violence with access to justice, truth, reparation and rehabilitation for such violations of their human rights, specifically:

(a) That there are no specific timelines or related targets for the effective implementation of the 2015 law regulating the status of civilian victims of sexual violence and related reparations (financial, symbolic, health and psychosocial services) and no data on the number of women subjected to violence and trauma, including sexual violence during the conflict, in order to facilitate the implementation of the legislation;

(b) That the failure to ensure full accountability for those responsible for violations of the human rights of women committed during the conflict means that many victims have received no reparation and/or compensation;

(c) That reports indicate that there are inadequate support and reintegration measures for women and children post-conflict returnees.

41. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Stipulate clear and time-bound targets and transparent and impartial processes for ensuring the effective implementation of its legislation providing compensation for victims of sexual violence during the 1991-1995 conflict and, in that context, take measures to encourage victims of such violations to report them and establish a corresponding system to gather data on the number of women subjected to violence and trauma, including sexual violence, during the conflict;**

(b) **Further strengthen its measures to investigate, prosecute and punish all acts of violence against women, including acts of sexual violence, perpetrated by private actors and by security and defence forces, the police and militant groups;**

(c) **Ensure the allocation of adequate resources to meet the needs of women and children post-conflict returnees, in particular access to a livelihood and education.**

Marriage and family relations

42. The Committee notes that the Family Act of 2014 has been suspended until the Constitutional Court reviews its conformity with the Constitution and that the Family Act of 2003 is currently in force. The Committee also notes that the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth submitted a new and final draft of the legislation for public debate early in February 2015. In that respect, the Committee is concerned about the lack of meaningful access by women's rights groups, especially compared with the level of access by "men's rights" groups, to the policy forums in which critical decisions are made about legislation and other policies that have a major impact on equality in the outcomes of divorce and custody proceedings. Such unequal access, together with a lack of transparency about decision-making, results in legislation that does not comply with article 16 of the Convention and the

Committee's general recommendations No. 19 on violence against women and No. 29 on article 16 of the Convention (economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution). More specifically, the Committee is concerned:

(a) That the proposed legislation adopts the "friendly parent" approach, under which a parent must encourage his or her child's contact with the other parent under all circumstances, including in cases of domestic violence, meaning that a mother seeking to limit visitation by a violent father could face heavy fines and incarceration of up to six months;

(b) That, while the mandatory mediation before the initiation of divorce proceedings proposed in the legislation excludes cases in which there is domestic violence, centres for social welfare nevertheless pressure women who are victims of domestic violence to agree to joint mediation;

(c) That, while the Family Code provides that property obtained during marriage is considered joint property to be divided equally upon divorce, intangible assets such as work-related benefits are not included.

43. **The Committee urges the State party, before the adoption of the amendments proposed in 2014 to the Family Act, to undertake comparative research of lessons learned in other countries that have carried out similar family law reforms. In particular, the Committee calls upon the State party:**

(a) **To amend legislation concerning child custody in divorce cases to ensure that violence by one parent against the other is identified and taken into account when deciding upon child custody and that refusal to allow visitation and contact on account of alleged violence is not held against the parent who has made the allegation;**

(b) **To exclude mandatory mediation in cases of domestic violence and train all community and social workers to refrain from pressuring women to agree to mediation in such cases;**

(c) **To take appropriate legal measures to include intangible property, such as pension funds, severance payments and insurance, accumulated during the relationship within the joint property to be equally divided upon dissolution of the relationship, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 29.**

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

44. **The Committee calls upon the State party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in its efforts to implement the provisions of the Convention.**

45. **The Committee calls for the integration of a gender perspective, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, into all efforts aimed at the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and into the post-2015 development framework.**

Dissemination

46. **The Committee recalls the obligation of the State party to systematically and continuously implement the provisions of the Convention. It urges the**

State party to give priority attention to the implementation of the present concluding observations and recommendations between now and the submission of the next periodic report. The Committee therefore requests that the present concluding observations be disseminated in a timely manner, in the official language of the State party, to the relevant State institutions at all levels (national, regional and local), in particular to the Government, the ministries, Parliament and the judiciary, to enable their full implementation. It encourages the State party to collaborate with all stakeholders concerned, such as employers' associations, trade unions, human rights and women's organizations, universities, research institutions and the media. It recommends that the present concluding observations be disseminated in an appropriate form at the local community level to enable their implementation. In addition, the Committee requests the State party to continue to disseminate the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and relevant jurisprudence, in addition to the Committee's general recommendations, to all stakeholders.

Ratification of other treaties

47. **The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments[1] would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State party to consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, to which it is not yet a party.**

Follow-up to the concluding observations

48. **The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 19 (a), (c), (d) and (e) and 31 (b) above.**

Preparation of the next report

49. **The Committee invites the State party to submit its sixth periodic report in July 2019.**

50. **The Committee requests the State party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6, chap. I).**

[1] The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.